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Japanese Netsuke

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MASTERWORKS IN MINIATURE: Japanese Netsuke

An exhibition of the G. H. Crone collection

AT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

November 22 - December 31, 1967

FOREWORD

The opportunity and the challenge of presenting this beautiful collection are equally welcomed by the staff of the Gallery. In addition to our gratitude to the owner of the G. H. Crone collection for making it available to us, we wish to acknowledge our debt to our consultant, Professor Glenn Webb of the Division of Art History, University of Washington, whose scholarship and energy have made the show a contribuition to the study of *netsuke*, and whose catalogue is sure of a place in the literature of this fascinating form of art; to Dr. Kato, Associate Professor of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia, for his invaluable assistance; to Mrs. Susan Childs, Assistant Curator (Research) of The Vancouver Art Gallery, for her unsparing efforts at every stage of the preparation for the show; and to Mr. Fred Douglas, our newly-appointed Display Technician, for his imaginative and handsome installation, which provides a fit setting for these jewels of art and skill.

ANTHONY EMERY, *Director*

INTRODUCTION

NETSUKE AND JAPANESE ART

The modernization of Japan did not begin, as some people imagine, with the Second World War, but in 1868 when, after nearly 300 years of isolation, her doors were opened to the world, and Western inventions, fashions, and political and economic systems were adopted. The first imitators of Western art at that time were for the most part students of Western science and technology (studies of "Scientific" perspective in Western painting were very much the rage), rather than professional artists. But by 1857, when a government-sponsored Academy of Western Art was established in Tokyo, there were hundreds of professional painters and sculptors working in the new Western style and the Japanese art world was clearly divided into modern and traditional camps.

Netsuke carvers were in the latter group, along with painters who were following Chinese or Japanese models. To combat the surge of Western art, these artists banded together and, under the leadership of a few articulate spokesmen (including Okakura Kakuzo and, rather ironically, a young American lecturer at Tokyo University, Ernest Fenollosa), were able to give traditional art new vitality and another fifty years of life – in spite of strong competition from the Western side.

In a sense, a study of *netsuke* is a study of late Japanese sculpture. Between about 1640, when the sculpture-encrusted architectural monuments at Nikko were created, and the beginning of the 18th century, Japanese sculpture was at a low ebb with no important monuments being commissioned and sculptors reduced to the routine production of stereotyped religious icons. The carving of *netsuke* gave sculptors a new outlet for their talents and most of the famous sculpture masters of the 19th and 20th centuries were, in fact, *netsuke* carvers. Many of them, like Asahi Gyokuzan (1843-1923), were Buddhist priests who occupied important positions in schools with a reputation for promoting traditional arts.

NETSUKE AND COLLECTORS

Netsuke are toggles, small fobs attached by cords to cases for personal seals and medicines, to tobacco pouches, and to other portable objects. As such, they have counterparts in other countries at various times, but their immediate prototypes are the ornate Chinese seals carved of wood, stone, or ivory that were introduced in Japan in the 16th century. By the 18th century, *netsuke* possessed characteristics that are best considered in light of native Japanese preferences and uses. Compared to the literature on other phases of Japanese art, that which is available on *netsuke* is quite abundant, and covers questions ranging from the importation of ivory (from Vietnam prior to 1868, then through British merchants) to biographies of *netsuke* artists.

Yet, for all the documentation, the phenomenon of *netsuke* remains largely unexplained for the Westerner. Violence, magic, virtue, cunning, gods, devils, animals: individual words, like individual *netsuke*, fail to tell the whole story, but taken together they constitute a miniature world that is the sum of its parts. In that world it seems on the one hand that rationality counts for nothing and nonsense has meaning; on the other hand, it seems that everything is mundane, understandable, predictable. The mysterious and the obvious coexist in the world of *netsuke* as they always have in Japan. But the mysteries and seeming contradictions exist only for the Westerner, who brings a foreign sense of what is reasonable to the question. Since for most Westerners, even collectors of Japanese art, their own interpretations, however inadequate, has been the only one, *netsuke* have remained somewhat of a puzzle.

This is not to say Westerners have not been fascinated by the puzzle, for they have indeed been challenged by the prospect of unraveling the meanings of *netsuke* themes, as they have been delighted by the intricacy of the carving. This has been true since the first European was beguiled by one of the small charms some 300 years ago. During an era and in a society that saw snuff boxes

and watch chains attain enormous popularity, it was natural that *netsuke* would capture the fancy of Westerners and that collecting them would become fashionable among the elite. By 1780 the Titsingh collection was on display in Amsterdam (a small contingent of Dutch had been permitted to keep a toe-hold in Japan during the centuries of isolation) and after Japan opened her ports to the rest of the world, important collections in England, France, and Germany reached maturity. The names Hart, Bowes, Franks, Behrens, de Goncourt, Gonse, and Gillot became linked with Oriental art, followed later by numerous others, including Brockhaus and Joly. *Netsuke* continued to be a rage among collectors until the 1930's.

Despite their popularity (for a generation of Westerners, *netsuke* constituted Japanese art), *netsuke* were never attempted by Western artists. "The minute, delicate, patient art of *netsuke* carving, lovingly carried out by skilled Japanese hands, is not an art duplicated by foreigners," says a noted Japanese collector, Ueda Reikichi (see bibliography). And indeed, foreigners lack the patience for the technique and the mind for the themes, both necessary to duplicate such an art.

THE DISPLAY

The *netsuke* collection exhibited here at The Vancouver Art Gallery is a late one, having been put together between about 1900 and 1925. The persons responsible for its formation were not specialists interested only in rare items, nor were they out to get the works of well-known masters. Nevertheless, the collection is remarkably complete, from both an artistic and historical viewpoint. There are early examples of the long, triangular, unsigned *netsuke* of animals and standing figures that were popular in the early 18th century (Nos. 36, 46, 19), and some of the latest (i.e., early 20th century) pieces are among the finest of their kind. A large majority of the *netsuke* in this collection are from the so-called "middle" period (ca. 1800-1868), which most experts feel was the golden age of

netsuke carving. The one outstanding feature of the collection is the uniformly high quality of each piece, regardless of age.

In cataloguing them, I have relied heavily on the work done by the authors of the books listed in the accompanying bibliography. There undoubtedly are errors in identification. In some cases signatures were illegible; in others the information about an artist, including his dates, has been taken from a biographical source that is in contradiction to information found in other sources; and many of the names on *netsuke* exhibited here do not appear at all in any of the known dictionaries of *netsuke* carvers. Even in those instances when signatures seem to match perfectly with those transcribed in artists' dictionaries, there is always the possibility of a piece being done by a student, but signed with the master's name. Finally, unsigned pieces have been assigned dates on stylistic grounds by one whose acquaintance with *netsuke* is rather short.

GLENN T. WEBB
Assistant Professor
Division of Art History
University of Washington

CATALOGUE

The catalogue is arranged chronologically in three general periods:

Early (1650-1800),

Middle (1800-1868),

Late (1868-1925).

Within each section the signed pieces are listed alphabetically by artist.

Unless otherwise indicated the material is ivory.

The average dimension is approximately 1¾ inches.

EARLY PERIOD 1650-1800

1 GYOKU-UN

This mythological creature, Karashishi, probably Near Eastern in origin, appeared early in Chinese art and was a favorite subject in Japan. It was a frequently used art motif of the Tokugawas and always symbolized power and stability.

2 HIDEMASA

Ca. 1800. Lived in both Tokyo and Kyoto.

Two demons *(Oni)* in bathtub.

3 HIDEMASA

Ca. 1800.

Wang Chih, the Chinese Rip Van Winkle who went into a cave where sages were playing *Go*, fell asleep and did not wake up for several centuries.

4 KAIMIN

Dates unknown. Ca. 1750-1800.

A hermit *(Sennin or Rishi)* carrying a large tree branch over his shoulder.

5 KOKUGYOKU

Dates unknown. Ca. 1800.

Standing man playing portable drum and singing.

6 KOSAI

A demon playing a *Taiko* (drum).

7 MASAMOTO

Dates unknown. Ca. 1800.

Hotei plays a *samisen* as the adoring children look on. (See No. 146).

8 OKATOMO

Active in Kyoto before 1781.

Two quail on a head of millet.

9 OKATOMO

Active in Kyoto before 1781.

Jackal baffled by a turtle. (wood, ivory inlay).

10 OKATORI

Active 1781-1800.

Quail on a head of millet.

11 RANTEI

Active in Kyoto 1789-1800.

Fukurokuju, the God of Longevity with the magical deer whose appearance (but not health) changes with age.

12 Signature uncertain, probably **SHUNKO.**

Active in Ise Ca. 1750-1806.

Daikoku-san, dancing the Sambaso role from No play "Okino." (See No. 58).

13 SHUZAN

Possibly Shuzan II Ca. 1770.

Priest carrying a *mokugyo*, a Buddhist musical instrument. (wood).

14 TOMOKAZU

Ca. 1765-1835.

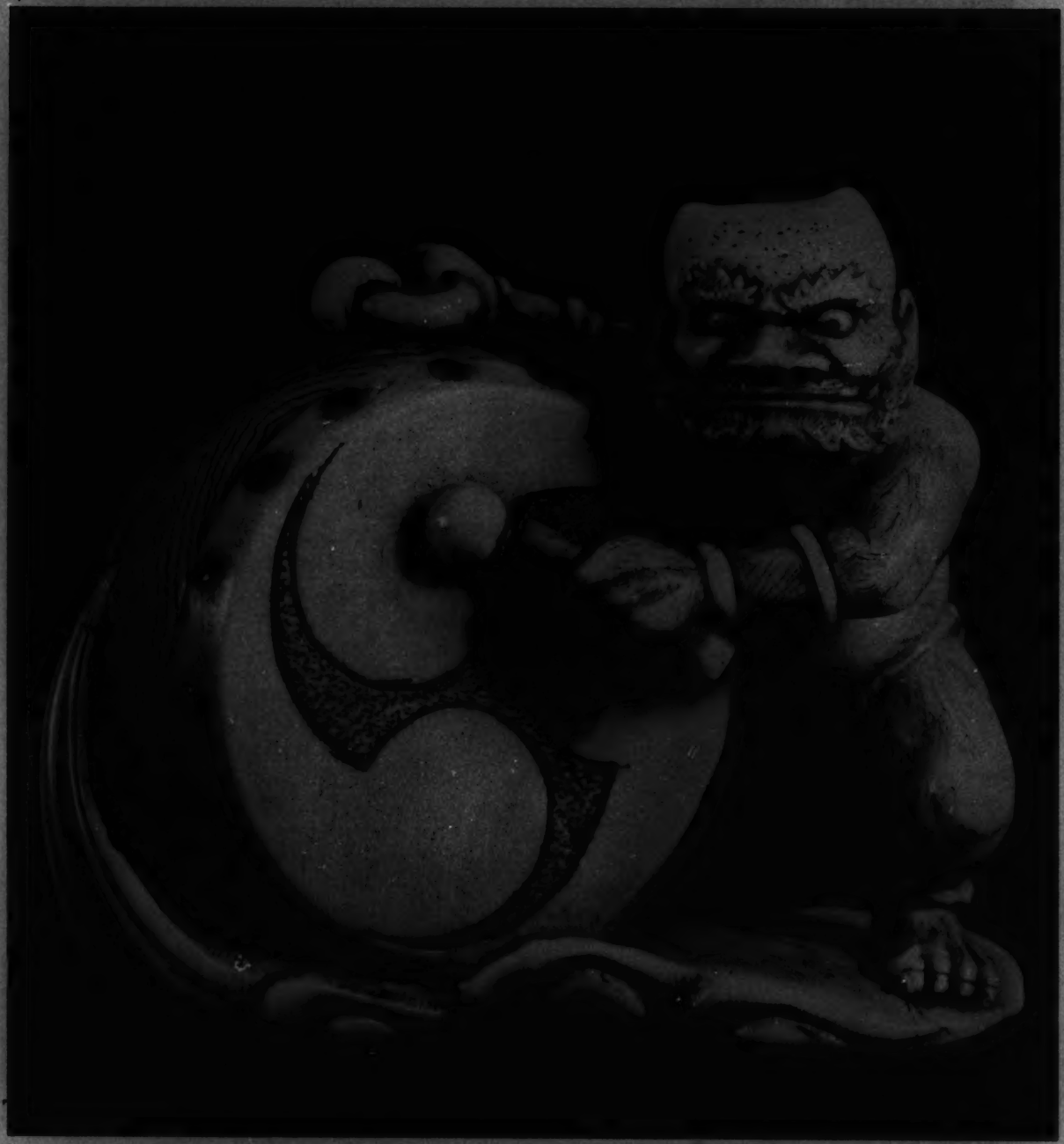
Karashishi with Sacred jewel. (See No. 1).

15 Signature and long inscription indecipherable.

Similar in style and type to the works of TOMOKAZU, Ca. 1765-1835, (See No. 14).

Ca. 1800.

Ox recumbent. A black ox is the symbol of Sugawara Michizane (847-903), the scholar hero whose loyalty in the face of persecution and exile was rewarded by posthumous deification. (wood).



10

16

17

16 TOMOTADO
Active in Kyoto in 1750.

This important artist's carving of a wild boar might have been worn as a Zodiac charm to symbolize courage or bold and sometimes rash action.

17 TOYOMASA

1773-1856. The artist, one of Japan's most famous *netsuke* carvers, lived in Shinoyama, West of Kyoto.

A yawning Hotei, one of the Seven Gods of Luck. (wood).

18 YOSHINAGA

An extremely important carver active in Kyoto before 1781.

The Taoist Immortal Gyokushi (Yu Tzu) who rode thousands of miles each day on a large horse and had miraculous control over clouds and wind.

19 Unsigned.
Ca. 1650-1750.

Horse. This is possibly the earliest *netsuke* in the collection.

20 Signature illegible.
Ca. 1780-1800.

Might be Tekkai, one of the eight great Taoist immortals, who was able to separate his spirit from his body. Once when his spirit returned from the heavens, his youthful body was gone and the spirit had no choice but to enter the dead body of a lame old man, which is how he is usually depicted. (wood).

21 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

A young poet reading a proverb which refers to happiness and prosperity.

22 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

Priest with a tiger (see No. 91).

23 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

A priest (or possibly the Chinese hermit Baseishi) with a begging bowl. (wood).

24 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

Gama Sennin – The Chinese hermit with a skin problem reputed to be so terrible that a wizard once followed as Gama went to the river by disguising himself as a frog just to see the hermit's unusual appearance. Gama is supposed to have given the frog a wonderful drug which enabled him to live for 100 years.

25 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

Skeleton beating a *mokugyo*, the Buddhist instrument used in chanting the Sutra; he is probably a departed priest.

26 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

Daikoku-san, one of the Seven Gods of Luck (See No. 61).

27 Unsigned but attributed to **MASANAO I.**
Ca. 1800.

Hotei with child attendant.

28 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

Hotei with three little dancing demons.

31

29

32

29 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
"Dojo-ji," one of the No theatre's most popular plays is based on a 10th Century legend concerning the love of a young girl, Kiyohime, for the priest Anchin. Anchin agrees to a secret meeting with Kiyohime but does not keep his promise. To escape her wrath he hides under a large bell at the temple Dojo-ji, near Wahayama. Consumed by the fury of unrequited love, Kiyohime turns into a dragon and wraps herself around the bell; her passion – in the form of real flames coming from her body – leaves only Anchin's ashes inside the bell.

30 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Karashishi (See No. 1).
(red lacquer).

31 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Mouse on a mushroom *(matsutake)*.

32 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Large monkey teasing a baby monkey with a pomegranate.

33 Signature illegible.
Sleeping cat.

34 Signature illegible.
Seven turtles in water.
(wood).

35 Unsigned.
Dancing man.

36 Unsigned.
Probably a monkey trainer *(sarumawashi)*; his sword indicates he may be a soldier in disguise. (See No. 116).

37 Unsigned.
Man carving two Daruma balls. Daruma, Bodhidharma, an Indian prince who became the 28th Patriarch of Buddhism, introduced the Ch'an (Zen) sect in China in the 6th Century A.D. He is shown here as a toy with only his head carved, the Japanese roly-poly.

38 Unsigned.
Sleeping man and headless monkey. This is a very unusual subject, and the implications of the headless monkey are unknown.

39 Unsigned.
A hermit probably the Buddhist *arhat* Jukaba Sonja, with his hand on a Karashishi. He was one of the sixteen Great Disciples of the Buddha, said to have come from Taxila in Central Asia and to have been a physician.

40 Unsigned.
The dwarf, Fukusuke, a legendary person and common motif for early *netsuke*. Shown here holding a flute *(sho)* and sticking out his tongue.

41 Unsigned.
Daikoku-san with the rat that is occasionally shown trying to get into the God's bag of goodies.

42 Unsigned.
Most likely Juro-jin, the God of Longevity and scholarly success and also one of the Seven Gods of Luck. He carries a scroll and a Chinese fan, and is accompanied by a crane.

43 Unsigned.
The straw hat and raft identify this resting man as a *ronin*, one of those masterless samurai whose lives of complete freedom made them outcasts in a society constructed on the basis of class and connection.

44 Unsigned.
Chinnan, the Chinese magician hermit Ch'en Nan, who lived over 1000 years. He once caused a dragon to emerge from a dried-up mud puddle and to fly into the heavens -- thereby breaking a long spell of draught. He is sometimes called the "Dragon *Sennin*."

45 Unsigned.
Hermit *(Sennin)* holding a gourd in which a boy is reading a scroll; or possibly a symbolic rendering of Momotaro (see No. 59).

46 Unsigned.
A hermit (*Sennin*). In some ways the pose is reminiscent of a Ni-o (See No. 113) but the gourd-like object he holds in his right hand probably indicates that this is Chokaro (Chung Kuo). He was Taoist hermit who lived in the 7th Century and is supposed to have come to life again, and to have wandered over China on a magic mule which the hermit kept in a shriveled gourd when he was not traveling.

47 Unsigned.
Man sleeping on a lotus pad, probably a *ronin* (See No. 43).

48 Unsigned.
Probably the Chinese hermit Chinnan who is here shown not with the dragon (See No. 44) but with his magic hat which he often used as a boat.

49 Unsigned.
A hermit, one of the Taoist immortals.

50 Unsigned.
Gama Sennin (See No. 24).

51 Unsigned.
Seated Gama Sennin (See No. 24).

52 Unsigned.
Gama Sennin (See No. 24).

53 Unsigned.
Gama Sennin (See No. 24).

54 Unsigned.
Mouse on rope.

55 Unsigned.
Monkey, (bone).

56 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Monkey on a pomegranate branch.

57 Unsigned.
Horse, (wood).

42

46

58 GENRYOSAI

Sambaso. The Sambaso actor is technically a *Kyogen* performer. The play itself "Okina" is always performed first on the No program to appease the Gods, and to establish a propitious atmosphere. It was given as early as the 12th century at Kasuga Shrine in Nara and may have originated there much earlier with Buddhist magician – priests *(shushi)* doing the dances. (wood).

59 GYOKKO

Active Ca. 1830-1867.

The legend 'Momotaro' tells of an aged woodcutter and his wife who had long wished for a child. One day the woodcutter found and brought home to his wife a large peach. Upon cutting into the fruit they discovered a baby boy whom they named Momotaro – the little peachling.

60 GYOKKO

Active Ca. 1830-1867.

Priest, perhaps Daruma (See No. 37), reading the Sutra and leaning on a *mokagyo.*

61 GYOKUMIN

Daikoku-san, one of the Seven Gods of Luck, here carries a folding fan, symbol of affluence, a branch, a mallet with which he can confer luck and wealth to worthy persons, the flat Chinese fan and other *takaramono,* or objects associated with the Gods of Luck.

62 GYOKUMIN

From Tokyo, Active Ca. 1850.

Priest playing a *biwa* accompanied by a small boy and a dog.

63 GYOKUMIN

Active Ca. 1865.

Monkey playing with a snake.

64 GYOKURYUSAI

Chang Liang, a Chinese hero of the Han Dynasty who was respectful of his elders to the extent that he picked up and returned a shoe that had fallen off the foot of an old man crossing a bridge on a mule. The old man turned out to be the venerable sage and magician Huanghsi-Kung and Chang was rewarded for his virtuous act many times during the rest of his life.

65 GYOKUSAI (From Tokyo)

Woman with cat, combing her hair.

66 GYOKUSEN

Ca. 1815.

Possibly Fukurokuju, God of Longevity, holding an ancient turtle with hundreds of years of parasitic plant growth covering his tail. Because the figure in this case does not have the elongated head and exaggerated smile characteristic of most Fukurokuju images and because he is dressed as a Chinese scholar, this may instead of Juro-jin in the land of the Immortals.

67 GYOKUSEN

Ca. 1815.

Little boy with flower in his hair, holding a gourd.

68 GYOKUSHU (From Tokyo)

Ca. 1850.

Two men going to market.

85

80

77

81

87

69 GYOKUSHU

Gentoku (Hsuan Te), the legendary hero escaping from an ambush by miraculously crossing a deep and swift river on horseback. He became Emperor of China, during the 3rd Century A.D.

70 Signed by **GYOKUZAN**, but it is not clear which one, probably earlier than the famous Asahi family artist. (See No. 150).

A *gigaku* mask, worn by actors playing the roles of old women.
(wood).

71 HOKEI

Active Ca. 1801-1821

Possibly a sneezing hermit who holds a slender ivory stick with which he tickles his nostrils to make himself sneeze.
(wood).

72 ICHIBUN

Ebisu-san, the God of Fishing, bearing a large carp. He is one of Seven Gods of Luck and supposedly the son of Daikoku-san.

73 ICHIMIN

Active Ca. 1800-1830.

Rodent with fruit.
(wood).

74 IKKAN

Ca. 1800-1820.

Horse.
(wood).

75 IKKO

Little boy standing by Hotei's bag (which he presumes to be full of toys).

76 ISSHISAI (Reading uncertain)

Man dancing with cherry blossoms, drinking saki, and making merry.

77 ITSUMIN

Active Ca. 1830-1867.

Two mice with a white radish *(daikon)*.

78 KOSHUN or MITSUTOSHI

Ca. 1800-1850.

Demon in guise of a NI-o Guardian pulling another demon out of a Buddhist *mokugyo;* he is presumably being saved from Buddhist influence or conversion.

79 KOUN (ASAMI)

An old couple with the symbol of longevity, the moss-covered turtle.

80 MASAKAT-SU

Ca. 1835-1899.

This rare example of the artist's work depicts a monkey eating a peach, a favorite theme symbolizing longevity.

81 MASANAO I (From Ise.)

1815-1890.

Frog sitting on sole of straw sandal; considered by some as an archtype of this artist's work.
(wood).

82 MASANAO I

1815-1890.

Frog on straw sandal.
(wood).

83 MASATAMI
Active Ca. 1848-1853.

The Seven Gods of Luck: Daikoku-san (See No. 61), Ebisu-san (See No. 72), Fukurokuju (See No. 66), Jurojin (See No. 42), Bishamon, another God of Wealth, Benten, the one lady among the seven, usually depicted with a *Biwa* (musical instrument) and Hotei, the popular and merry God of Contentment. They seem to have been Shinto deities before being more fully formulated in a Buddhist context in the 17th Century. They are still popular objects of reverence in Japanese folk religion.

84 MASATAMI
Active Ca. 1848-1853.

Hotei in his own bag and a child.

85 MASATAMI
Active Ca. 1848-1853.

Turtle and monkey. This Nagoya artist is said to have specialized in carving monkey *netsuke* for export.
(wood).

86 MASATOSHI (From Nagoya)
Died 1884.

Three fisherwomen bathing an octopus.

87 MASATOSHI (From Tokyo)

A satirical carving of a monkey dressed as a man wearing an *Inro*, looking at a *netsuke* which is carved as a monkey.

88 MASATOSHI (Alias UNINDO and GEKKIN).
Ca. 1830-1884.

Shoki, the Demon Queller. The legend dates back to the T'ang Dynasty. Shoki was unable to pass the Imperial Examinations (in Chinese Classics) and committed suicide. Impressed by a student with such lofty ideals, the Emperor had the boy's body buried with high honors, and in gratitude Shoki's spirit promised to protect China from demons forever.

89 MASATSUGU (Alias KAIGYOKUSAI: he used MASATSUGU between 1820-1830).
1813-1893.

Three pomegranates with a cicada. From Ueda Reikichi, "Kaigyokusai . . . is pre-eminent among *netsuke* artists . . . His work is pure and polished beyond description." (p. 120).

90 Unsigned but attributed to **MASAYUKI.**
Active 1801-1818.

Sleeping man with monkey.

91 MITSUMASA

The 7th Century Chinese hermits Kanzan and Jittoku (Han Shan and Shih Te) reading a scroll of Kanzan's poetry and accompanied by the pet tiger of their priest friend Feng Kan.

92 Signature uncertain, probably **MITSUMASU**

Boy spinning a top.

93 MITSUNOBU

Boy with two baskets full of clams.

94 MUNEMITSU

The subject is Kumasaka Chohan, the 12th Century Robin Hood and his men (See No. 164); the figures seem to all be children, which may be interpreted as a performance by children in a temple school *(terakoya)* of the play "Kumasaka" by ZENCHIKU UJINOBU (1414-1500).

89

95 NORISHIGE

Dates uncertain: according to some schools 1772-1788, and according to others 1830-1843.

Family scene: Woman with children on a horse, while two figures pull the horse.

96 RYOMIN

Active Ca. 1850.

A Chinese General on horseback, probably Gentoku (See No. 69).

97 RYUSHU

Dates unknown but probably an artist in the Tokyo "Ryu" school of the 19th century.

Four monks trying to move the temple bell under which they will find the ashes of Anchin (See No. 29).

98 RYUZAN

Ca. 1860.

A Bugaku dancer (in the Ranryo-o role) with a child.

99 SHIGEMASA

Active Ca. 1801-1829.

Urashima married an enchanted princess and lived happily with her for three years in the Dragon Kingdom. Wishing to return home he begged her leave, and she, sadly relenting, gave him a casket as a bond to ensure their future reuniôn, warning him never to open it. When foolish Urashima opened the casket a blue mist escaped and he crumbled away, a 300 year-old man.

100 SHINGYOKU

Two giant snails attacking a farmer.

101 SHINICHI

Man riding a giant carp with another man in its mouth. Possibly Kinko, the Chinese hermit – artist who was taken by the King of Fishes on a tour of the river world in recognition of Kinko's talent for painting marvelously animated carp.

102 SHOITSU

Daikoku-san, with demon escaping from his bag.

103 Unsigned but attributed to **SHOKYUSAI.**

Active Ca. 1801-1829.

Cormorant fishing, showing the men holding onto ropes tied around the necks of cormorants (pelican-like birds) which are catching small river trout in their beaks.

104 SHOZAN

Active Ca. 1830-1867.

Clothes dyeing merchant reading a business letter.

105 SHUMEI

Two boys in a procession playing a drum.

106 SOGEN

Ebisu-san with an octopus. (See No. 72).

107 Signature uncertain, probably **TAISAN**

Ca. 1800.

Daikoku-san and Ebisu-san wrestling (See No. 61 and No. 72).

108 TAMEKAZU

Ca. 1800-1825. Probably a follower of Tametaka in Nagoya.

Gama Sennin (See No. 24).

109 TEIMIN

Manju style *netsuke*, four masks with an elephant on back.
(wood).

110 TOMOAKI
Ca. 1800-1830.

Probably Asahina Saburo (12th-13th Century) whose great strength and powers as a warrior are legendary. He is said to have descended into Hell where, after he had defeated many demons, the king of Hell (Emma-o) entertained him at a banquet.

111 TOMOCHIKA I (From Tokyo).

The Buddha dehorning a demon, thus removing his evil powers.

112 TOMOCHIKA I
Ca. 1800-1873.

Karashishi (See No. 1).

113 TOMOMASA

Artist carving a Buddhist Guardian Figure (Ni-o), one of the two Deva Kings guarding certain Buddhist temples.

114 TOUN (Alias IKKOSAI).
Active Ca. 1830-1843.

Probably a New Year's celebration with the Lion Dance *(Shishimai)*.

115 YASUMOTO

Priest on horse with a small boy attendant.

116 Unsigned

Monkey trainers *(saramawashi)*, were allowed to travel freely throughout the country. Kusunoki Masashige (1294-1336), at one time sent one of his soldiers disguised as a monkey trainer to spy out the plans of an enemy force. The *netsuke* with this subject may thus remind the viewer of the usefulness of skillfully practiced deceit. (See No. 36).

117 Unsigned.

Peasant carrying his goods to the market place.

118 Unsigned.
Dated 'Tempo 3' (1832).

Boy carrying water bucket and an accounts notebook with "Good day" written on it.

119 Unsigned.

Little boy under a lotus leaf holding a dragon fly.

120 Signature illegible.

Water buffalo with figures.

121 Signature illegible.

Boy looking at a beetle on his kimono.
(wood).

122 Unsigned.

Monkeys.

123 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.

Farmer carrying mushroom.

124 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Sambaso dancer shown doing the *momi-no-dan*, a dance which precedes the dance he does next wearing a mask. (see No. 58).

125 Unsigned.
Kyogen actor wearing the *usobuki* mask (which is meant to show the face one makes when whistling) in the role of the dim-witted thief in the "Uri-nusubito."

126 Unsigned.
No dancer with fan, a woman, and a man beating a drum.

127 Unsigned.
Sambaso dancer here shown wearing the *hakushiki-jo* mask and accentuating the dance steps with a rattle made of bells. The tongue is affixed inside in such a way that it projects and retracts with a slight movement of the hand. (Such *netsuke* are known as *shita-dashi*).
(wood).

128 Unsigned.
Hannya mask. (See No. 172).

129 Unsigned.
Squirrel and grapes.

130 Unsigned.
Mask of Ebisu-san, worn in such Kyogen plays as "Ebisu Bishamon." (See No. 72).

129

127

131 Signature illegible.
Okame (or Uzume) the Goddess of Mirth, who danced outside the cave where the Sun Goddess was hiding. She is shown here performing *Oni-yarai*, the New Year's ceremony of tossing dried peas on the floor, an act which is sure to rid one's house of demons (shown hiding under her skirt).

132 Unsigned.
Conch shells were carried by wandering priests *(yamabushi)*, who used them to exorcise devils. This is probably Benkei, a hero of the 12th Century who became a *yamabushi*. He is said to have been eight feet tall and a great fighter.

133 Unsigned.
Kyoyu (Hsu Yu) the legendary Chinese sage who, when asked by the Emperor to take his place, rushed to a waterfall and "washed the temptation" out of his ears, thus; the archtype of a virtuous person.

134 Unsigned.
Three priests and a demon with a mop. Legend unknown.

135 Signature illegible.
Couple of demons with a child demon.

136 Signature illegible.
Daikoku-san (God of Wealth) (See No 61).

137 Signature illegible.
Namazu the Earthquake Fish. The deity Nushi shown rubbing his back with a magical gourd, thus quieting the fish. (wood).

138 Signature illegible.
A pudgy God of Luck riding on a kite.

139 Unsigned.
Ca. 1850.
Moso, one of the Chinese paragons of filial piety, lived in the 3rd Century A.D. One harsh winter, when the ground was frozen solid, Moso's dying mother expressed a desire for stewed bamboo shoots. Moso cried when he saw the empty bamboo grove, when suddenly his warm tears caused fresh shoots to grow.

140 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800-1825.
Chinese sage, probably Kyosenhei (Hsu Hsuan P'ing) of the 8th Century who is often holding a peach.

141 Unsigned.
Gama Sennin (See No. 24).

142 Unsigned.
Pehaps these are the Three Monkeys of the God of the Roads (*sambiki-zaru)* at play; Mi (who sees no evil), Kika (who hears no evil), and Iwa (who speaks no evil).
(wood).

143 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Maybe the Chinese hermit Wu Chih-tze (Bushishi) with his magic blue scroll.

144 Unsigned.
Ca. 1800.
Ronin (See No. 43).
(wood).

145

154

151

145 BISHIN
Ca. 1890.
A *tofu* (bean curd) vendor.

146 GYOKUBUN
Ca. 1870's.
Hotei with two children, one of the Seven Gods of Luck. Hotei carries a bag full of *takaramono* (precious things). He is usually identified with Pu-tai, the early 10th Century Chinese priest who was known as a magician and a great lover of children.

147 GYOKUBUN
Ca. 1870's.
Fugen Bosatsu (Samanatabhadra), the Bodhisattva (See No. 175) of consummate goodness, often is shown, as here, with a scroll of scripture (the Lotus Sutra). His vehicle is the elephant.

148 GYOKUHO
Ca 1868-1900.
Man playing a portable drum dressed as a samurai, with his helmet put back.

149 GYOKUICHI
Ca. 1870's.
Perhaps the horse that Jingoro, the 17th Century left handed sculptor, once carved for a Shinto Shrine, carving it so realistically that it roamed the countryside at night.

150 GYOKUZAN (ASAHI)
1843-1923.
The artist was ordained as a priest but spent his entire life carving ivory. Innumerable honors were bestowed upon him during the Meiji period.
Horaisan, the Chinese land of Elixir, or sometimes described as a Mountain in the Islands of Paradise.

151 GYOKUZAN (ASAHI)
1843-1923 (See No. 150).
Old Chinese man with young boy in attendance.

152 GYOKUZAN
1843-1923 (See No. 150).
Old man with green persimmons.

153 GYOKUZAN
1843-1923 (See No. 150).
Shoki, the Demon Queller, battling two demons. (See No. 88).

154 HOMEI
Active Ca. 1860-1890.
Young Shotoku Taishi (Prince Regent of Japan in the 7th Century) with brush and paper.

155 KOGYOKU
Active Ca. 1868-1900.
The story of the "Weaving Princess," or the Tanabata Festival. Although the theme would seem to be pure genre, the reference is clear enough to the ancient Chinese story of the young herdsman who was chosen to wed the daughter of the Sun, but who was separated from her because of her frivolous ways. The couple is symbolized by two stars that meet in the sky once each year: on the 7th night of the 7th month by the lunar calendar. July 7th is the date reserved for a festival commemorating this event in Japan, with the largest celebration held in the streets of Sendai.

158

162

156 **KOKEISAI (or KOKEISAI SANSHO)**
1871-1936.
A Daruma 'toy' (See No. 37), waiting for someone to paint in the pupils of the eyes in order to "bring the Daruma to life." (wood).

157 **KOSAI**
Could be one of many legends. Possibly the story of an old man whose pet sparrow took him to his home in the trees and offered him one of two gifts – one large and one small; the old man chose the small one, which became like the goose with golden eggs, providing him with an inexhaustable supply of treasures.

158 **SEIGYOKU**
Active Ca. 1860-1880.
Three monkeys preparing fish.

159 Signature uncertain, probably **SHOMEI.**
(Ca. 1870's).
Tennin (Buddhist angel) playing a flute and entertaining two men. Possibly the setting is Horaisan (See No. 150).

160 **SHUKO**
Ca. 1870's.
Child with hobby horse.

161 **SHUNGETSU**
Ca. 1835-1900.
Three Chinese children at play.

162 **SHURAKU**
Active Ca. 1866-1911.
Daruma waking up. When Bodhidharma (See No. 37) left India for China in the early 6th Century he had an audience with the Emperor in Nanking, and then went on to Mt. Wu T'ai, where he remained for nine years, seated unmoving, and staring at a stone wall. The design of this *manju netsuke* (bean cake shaped) was a popular one which symbolized the end of the revered patriach's long period of meditation.

163 **SOJI**
Ca. 1880's.
Boy eating rice cakes.

164 **TOKOKU**
Ca. 1870's.
This may be Kumasaka Chohan, the famous 12th Century robber immortalized in the No play of the same name. He is usually shown preparing his next ambush.

165 **TOMOCHIKA (III?)**
Ca. 1850-1900.
A vendor, selling bean curd *(tofu)*.

166 Signed **TOSHIMASA,** the name of an early carver, but stylistically this piece is 'Late' (1868-1925).
Kyogen mask *Shikami*, worn by actors portraying angry, powerful men.

167 Unsigned.
Ca. 1970's.
Woman.

168 Unsigned.
An exasperated rat catcher at work.

169 Signature illegible.
Boy vendor with noodles, sald, etc.

171

170 Unsigned.
Ca. 1890's.

Monkey from a *saru-shibai*, or traveling monkey show, with a goblin mask.

171 Signature illegible.
Ca. 1890's.

Dancer in the Ranryo-o role.

172 Signature illegible.
Ca. 1868-1910.

No mask, *Hannya*, a female ghost or demon, worn in several plays, including Dojo-Ji (See No. 29).

173 Signature illegible.
Ca 1880's.

Daikoku-san painting a plate (brush in his mouth, ink in left hand), demon under stool, boy holding plate.

174 Unsigned.
Ca. 1870's.

Figure represents *Tennin*, the angels of Buddhist paradise who are accomplished musicians and dancers; she is playing a hand drum *(tsuzumi)* and is dressed in the costume of Chinese court ladies of the T'ang Dynasty.

175 Unsigned.

Kuan Yin (Kannon or Avalokitesvara) with a child. In Japan this deity is the most widely worshipped of all those being known as Bodhisattva, who are the embodiment of the Buddha – nature. In art his compassionate spirit is often stressed by rendering the figure as a woman, as it is in this case, for which reason Kuan Yin is also known as the Goddess of Mercy.
(wood).

176 Unsigned.
Ca. 1870's.

Usually a snail is included with the frog and snake to create a *sansukumi*, an endless system of check and counter check. The snake can eat the frog, the frog can eat the snail, but the snail is poisonous to the snake.

177 Unsigned.
Ca. 1900-1925.

Frog.

178 Unsigned.
Ca. 1900-1925.

Two frogs.

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